

Lake Champlain Federal Partners Meeting Minutes April 5, 2006

Edited by: Erik H. Beck, US EPA Written by: Donna Parrish, USGS

Finalized January 4, 2007

Abstract

This regularly scheduled (quarterly) meeting was held on April 5, 2006 at the offices of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, 356 Mountain View Drive, Colchester, Vermont, and by Conference Call bridge provided by EPA New England.

Attendees:

- Erik Beck, Chair, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Dave Tilton, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Donna Parish, USGS, Vermont Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit
- Dave Hoyt, U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Beckett Grealish, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (by phone)
- Jason Shea, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (by phone)
- Mark Malchoff, Lake Champlain Sea Grant Program
- Keith Robinson, U.S. Geological Survey (by phone)
- Tom Berry, Office of Senator James Jeffords
- Robert Paquin, Office of Senator Patrick Leahy

Summary

November 30, 2005 Minutes

With discussion and corrections, the workgroup members approved the November 30, 2005 minutes (moved by David Tilton, seconded by Donna Parish).

Agency Updates

ACOE

Jason Shea provided an update on his month-long work in the Katrina ravaged area of Mississippi. He arrived in mid-September and was part of the NY District's efforts to provide temporary housing in trailer parks or on an individual's property. He commented on what a meaningful experience it was to help alleviate some of the problems facing those living in the area.

Jason also reported on the conference ACOE had with TNC in November where the two entities developed an MOU. TNC is impressed with work in the Lake Champlain basin. Others (FWS, NRCS, USGS, and EPA) described their interactions with TNC. It was agreed that Jason would contact TNC folks to set up a meeting with our group to discuss partnership opportunities.

Congressional Delegation Update

None. The topics that interest us will come out later in the summer.

FWS Update

Dave Tilton provided information regarding the National Fish Habitat Initiative and model joint venture project in the East, restoration of Eastern brook trout. Dave is also involved in the lower Great Lakes joint venture, which is trying to create clout in directing funds, if not, at least accessing political funds.

NRCS

Dave Hoyt indicated EQIP and WHIP funds have been allocated for this year for water quality and waste management. NRCS is looking into funding some fish passage projects.

USGS, Vermont Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Update

Donna Parrish gave a brief summary of most Unit projects, including several beyond Lake Champlain. The Unit is conducting research on sea lamprey, temperature of coldwater streams, smelt and alewife interaction in Champlain.

EPA Update

Beckett reported the EPA is being scrutinized for grants administration regarding competition. Erik Beck reported on climate change-invasives and climate change RFP is coming out this summer. IJC is contracting directly with the basin program with respect to farmers influence on water quality in Misisiquoi Bay.

USGS, NH-VT

Provided by Keith Robinson. Senator Jefford's groundwater bill will probably make it out of committee. Winter road salt study is being conducted with AOT in three Chittenden county sites. Another year may be added to the study.

Lake Champlain Sea Grant

Provided by Mark Malchoff. The coherent area proposal is being redrafted. Currently, LCSG is operating at the project level, which is renewed annually. The coherent area program level designation would indicate an advanced status. To obtain this designation, LCSG needs to demonstrate ongoing extension, research, and communication. The highest level with the program is the designation as a Sea Grant College. The redraft of the coherent area proposal should be resubmitted within 3-5 months.

Chair and Vice-chair Selection

How do we want to handle electing chair and vice-chair? In the past, the transition occurred when someone volunteered. Who will do it next? Dave Tilton passed out copies of the bylaws. We will discuss this issue in relation to the bylaws between now and the next meeting.

Next Meeting:

Next meeting (originally) set for August 15, 2006, 1PM¹ Potential topics are: Ecosystem team and federal partners collaboration regarding fish passage. An opportunity to teleconference will be arranged for those who need it.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:45.

¹Changed to September 27, 2006 as a joint meeting with the Ecosystem Team.